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AUTHOR Klein, Robert E.
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ABSTRACT

Data from the October 1983 education supplement to the Current Population Survey were examined to determine school enrollment of male veterans and nonveterans 20-34 years old. Overall, 16 percent of nonveterans and 11.1 percent of veterans were enrolled. Differences existed among 5-year age groups. Only in the youngest group, aged 20-24 years, were nonveterans more likely to be enrolled than veterans. Veterans in the two oldest groups, ages 25-29 and 30-34, were more likely to be enrolled in school than nonveterans. Veterans were much less likely than nonveterans to be enrolled below the college level, but they were more likely to be enrolled in "special schools." At the college level, enrollment for veterans and nonveterans was similar. Only a small proportion (about 7 percent) of both veterans and nonveterans employed full-time were enrolled in school. A much higher proportion of part-time workers were enrolled: 60 percent of veterans and over 70 percent of nonveterans. More than 26 percent of veterans and only about 10 percent of nonveterans who were full-time college students worked full-time. Between 1978 and 1983 the proportion of veterans enrolled in college declined; the proportion of nonveterans enrolled increased. (YLB)

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SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AMONG MALE VETERANS AND NONVETERANS

20 TO 34 Years Old

October 1983

Office of Information Management and Statistics

Monograph 70-85-5

by

Robert E. Klein, Ph.D., Statistician

Office of Information Management and Statistics

Statistical Policy and Research Service

Statistical Review and Analysis Division (713)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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FOREWORD

The Veterans Administration has long been interested in the education of veterans. The Agency has provided educational assistance to veterans since the inception of the World War II GI Bill in 1944. Over the years, millions of veterans have taken advantage of this assistance as they enrolled in the Nation's colleges, universities, and technical and vocational schools. This report focuses on educational enrollment among male veterans 20 to 34 years of age in 1983. It discusses the ways veterans differ from their nonveteran counterparts with regard to several dimensions of school enrollment, including enrollment rates, the kinds of schools in which they are enrolled, the relationship between school enrollment and employment, and changes in enrollment patterns between 1978 and 1983.

This report was written by Dr. Robert E. Klein of the Statistical Review and Analysis Division. The author gratefully acknowledges comments on the text provided by William Maloy, Allen Peden, and Lynne Heltman and thanks Angel Feemster and Betty Watson for their careful typing of the manuscript.

ROBERT W. SCHULTZ, Director
Office of Information Management and Statistics

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Veterans differ in many ways from nonveterans with respect to school enrollment. These differences are important to gauge because they can lead to disparities in the quality of the lives of veterans and nonveterans.

In general, male nonveterans aged 20 to 34 hold an edge in school enrollment over male veterans of that age. The "edge" is about five percentage points; 16 percent of nonveterans are enrolled compared with 11 percent of veterans. Observation of the entire 15-year group, however, masks significant pattern differences among 5-year age groups. Specifically, it is only in the youngest group, males 20 to 24 years old, that nonveterans are more likely to be enrolled than their veteran counterparts. Because military service causes them to postpone their education, most veterans enroll in school at older ages; nonveterans are not similarly constrained. Therefore, veterans aged 25 and older, unlike younger veterans, are more likely to be enrolled than their nonveteran counterparts.

In some ways, differences in overall enrollment are less informative than differences in the kinds of school attended. For example, veterans are much less likely than nonveterans to be enrolled below the college level, but they are more likely to be enrolled in "special schools" (non-degree technical, vocational, or business schools). At the college level, on the other hand, enrollment for veterans and nonveterans is similar. About ninety percent of veterans and nonveterans attending school are enrolled in college. However, veterans 20 to 34 years old are less likely to be attending college full-time, and those veterans within each 5-year age group have a lower median year (freshman, sophomore, etc.) of college enrollment than nonveterans.

To a large extent, school enrollment and employment are related events. For example, only a small proportion (about 7 percent) of both veterans and nonveterans employed full-time, as well as those unemployed, are enrolled in school. A much higher proportion of part-time workers are enrolled: 60 percent of veterans and over 70 percent of nonveterans. While only a small proportion of the full-time work force is made up of students, a large proportion of the population of students is made up of students who work. Indeed, a majority of both veterans and nonveterans aged 20 to 34 who are enrolled are also employed. Enrolled veterans of that age are more likely to be employed than nonveterans. A major difference between veterans and nonveterans is the proportion of full-time college students among them who are working full-time: more than 26 percent of veterans and only about 10 percent of nonveterans. The difference is explained, in part, by the fact that veterans are more likely than nonveterans to be married and heading a family, with obligations to support family members.

Between 1978 and 1983, the proportion of veterans aged 20 to 34 who were enrolled in college declined, while the proportion of nonveterans enrolled increased. This is true for each 5-year age group. The decline for veterans is attributed, in some measure, to the decline in the number of veterans eligible for GI Bill benefits compared with the increase in the number of veterans eligible for more limited educational benefits under the Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP).

I. Introduction

Veterans 20 to 34 years old differ in many ways from their nonveteran counterparts with respect to school enrollment.* These differences are important to gauge, for in addition to providing intangible benefits, education often enhances earning power. Any differences in school enrollment, therefore, may cause disparities in the quality of the lives of veterans and nonveterans later on.

The Veterans Administration has had a long-standing interest in the school enrollment of veterans. Educational benefits from the VA have been available to veterans since the inception of the World War II GI Bill in 1944. Veterans' education benefits, along with other VA benefits, have helped servicemen make the transition back to civilian life. The original GI Bill and those which followed were intended to assist veterans in their efforts to make up for interruptions in the formal educational process caused by time spent in active military service. Although this report does not relate veterans' school enrollment directly to receipt of benefits, current enrollment does, in part, reflect the incentive to enroll, created by eligibility for VA education benefits.

This report focuses on differences between male veterans and nonveterans 20 to 34 years old in such dimensions of enrollment as level of schooling and full-time

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* The term "veteran" in this report refers both to those males who served in the armed forces during a designated period of conflict (war veterans) and to those males who served during other periods (peacetime veterans). Since this analysis is limited to veterans aged 20 to 34, veterans in 1983 who served during a period of conflict are Vietnam era veterans. Those who did not are mainly post-Vietnam era veterans. The term "nonveterans" in this report refers only to male nonveterans.

or part-time status, as well as enrollment differences by age and by employment status. Although most of the report concerns enrollment as of October 1983, the change in school enrollment patterns between 1978 and 1983 is also examined.

The data for this report come from the October education supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). School enrollment information is based on responses to questions as to whether the person was enrolled in school during the current term or school year in any type of graded public, parochial, or other private school in the "regular" school system. Schools in the "regular" system include elementary schools, junior and senior high schools, colleges, universities, and professional schools. Attendance may be either full-time or part-time, during the day or evening. Regular schooling is that which may advance a person toward an elementary or high school diploma, or a college, university, or professional school degree. Persons enrolled in college are those who have been enrolled during the current term or school year in a 4-year or 2-year college, university, or professional school.

The "special schools" category, included in school enrollment figures, is a designation for schools offering trade, business, vocational, or other courses which are <u>not</u> taken to advance toward a diploma or degree in elementary school, high school, college, or professional school. Excluded from this category are programs offering on-the-job training, correspondence courses which are not transferable to a "regular school," and classes taken specifically for social or recreational purposes.

II. The Incidence of School Enrollment of Veterans and Nonveterans

Enrollment by Five-Year Age Groups

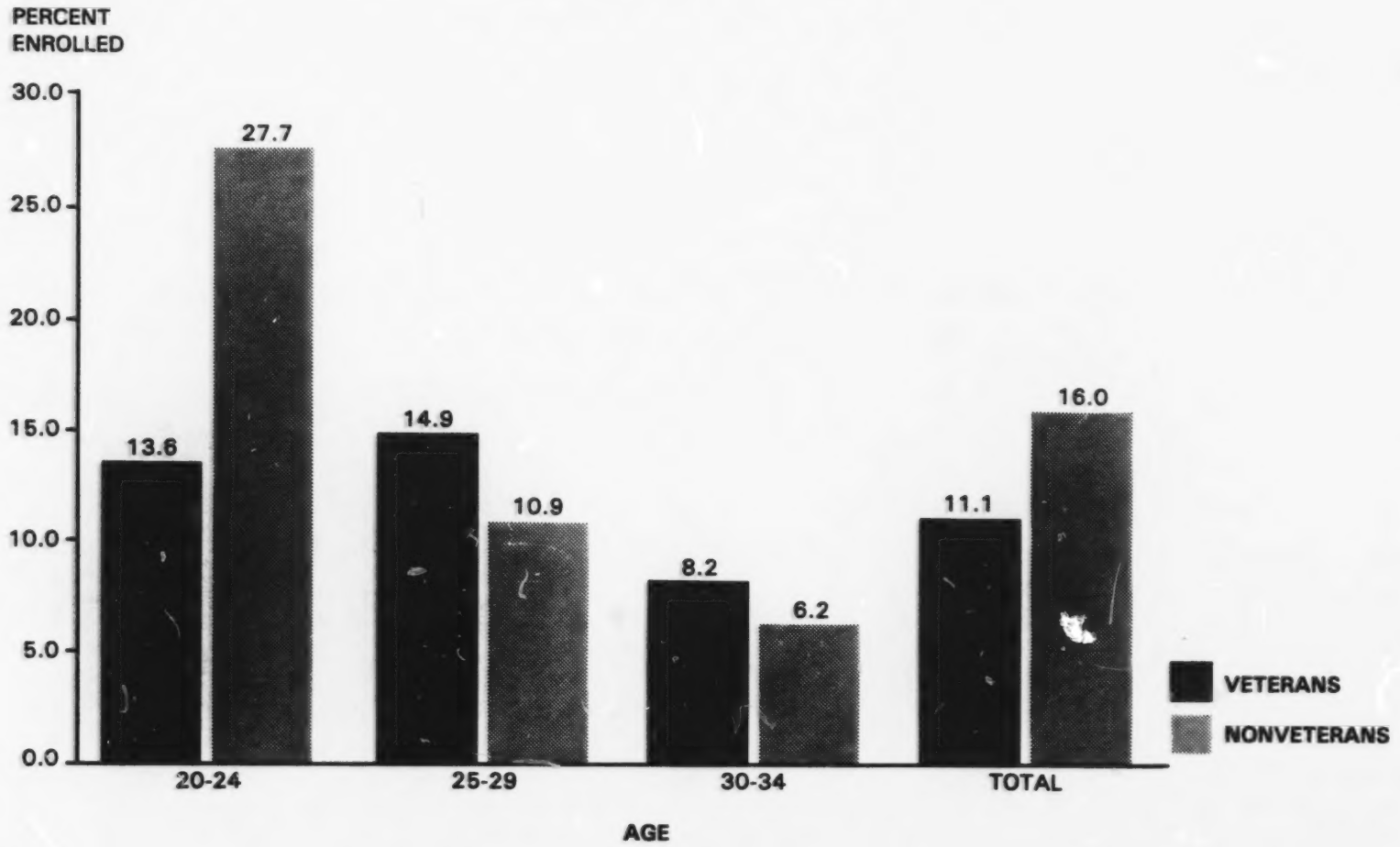
Among males 20 to 34 years old, nonveterans are more likely to be enrolled in school than veterans; 16.0 percent of nonveterans are enrolled compared with 11.1 percent of veterans (Table 1 and Figure 1). The edge nonveterans 20 to 34 have over veterans of that age can be attributed to the high rate of enrollment among the youngest men. Nonveterans in the youngest group, those 20 to 24, are more than twice as likely to be enrolled as veterans (27.7 percent of nonveterans versus 13.6 percent of veterans). For men 25 and older, however, the pattern is reversed: veterans are more likely to be enrolled than nonveterans. Nearly 15 percent of veterans 25 to 29 are enrolled compared with just under 11 percent of nonveterans; and among men 30 to 34, 8.2 percent of veterans are enrolled, slightly more than the 6.2 percent of nonveterans. This is not surprising. Many veterans re-enter school at older ages because military service has interrupted

Table 1. Percent Enrolled in School[1] by Five-Year Age Groups: Male Veterans and Nonveterans 20 to 34 Years Old, October 1983
(Numbers in Thousands)

	Veterans		Nonveterans	
Age	Percent Enrolled	Population	Percent Enrolled	Population
20-24	13.6	462	27.7	9,662
25-29	14.9	1,331	10.9	8,770
30-34	8.2	2,216	6.2	6,940
Total	11.1	4,009	16.0	25,372

[1]Includes primary and secondary school, college, and special schools. See text for more information on schools.

FIGURE 1
PERCENT ENROLLED IN SCHOOL BY FIVE-YEAR AGE GROUPS: MALE VETERANS AND NONVETERANS 20 TO 34 YEARS OLD, OCTOBER 1983



or postponed their education. Nonveterans, on the other hand, have not been similarly constrained. Furthermore, higher enrollment among 20 to 24 year-old nonveterans than among the youngest veterans is due, in part, to the fact that, even within this age group, nonveterans are younger than veterans,* and it is the youngest among the 20 to 24 year-old nonveterans who have the highest rates of school enrollment (data not shown).

In summary, then, while older veterans within the 20 to 34 year age group are more likely to be enrolled than older nonveterans, the greater propensity for nonveterans 20 to 24 to be enrolled and the fact that this group constitutes nearly 40 percent of all nonveterans aged 20 to 34 together explain the proportionate difference in enrollment between veterans and nonveterans in the entire 15-year age group. In contrast, the group of veterans showing the greatest propensity to enroll, the 25 to 29 year-old group, makes up one-third of the veterans' entire 15-year age group, whereas the age group among veterans showing the lowest propensity to enroll, the 30 to 34 year-olds, constitutes more than one-half (55.3 percent) of all veterans aged 20 to 34 years (Figure 2).

Type of School and Year of Enrollment

The edge which nonveterans 20 to 24 have over veterans of that age in overall school enrollment is more pronounced, in some ways, when the type of school and year of enrollment are considered.

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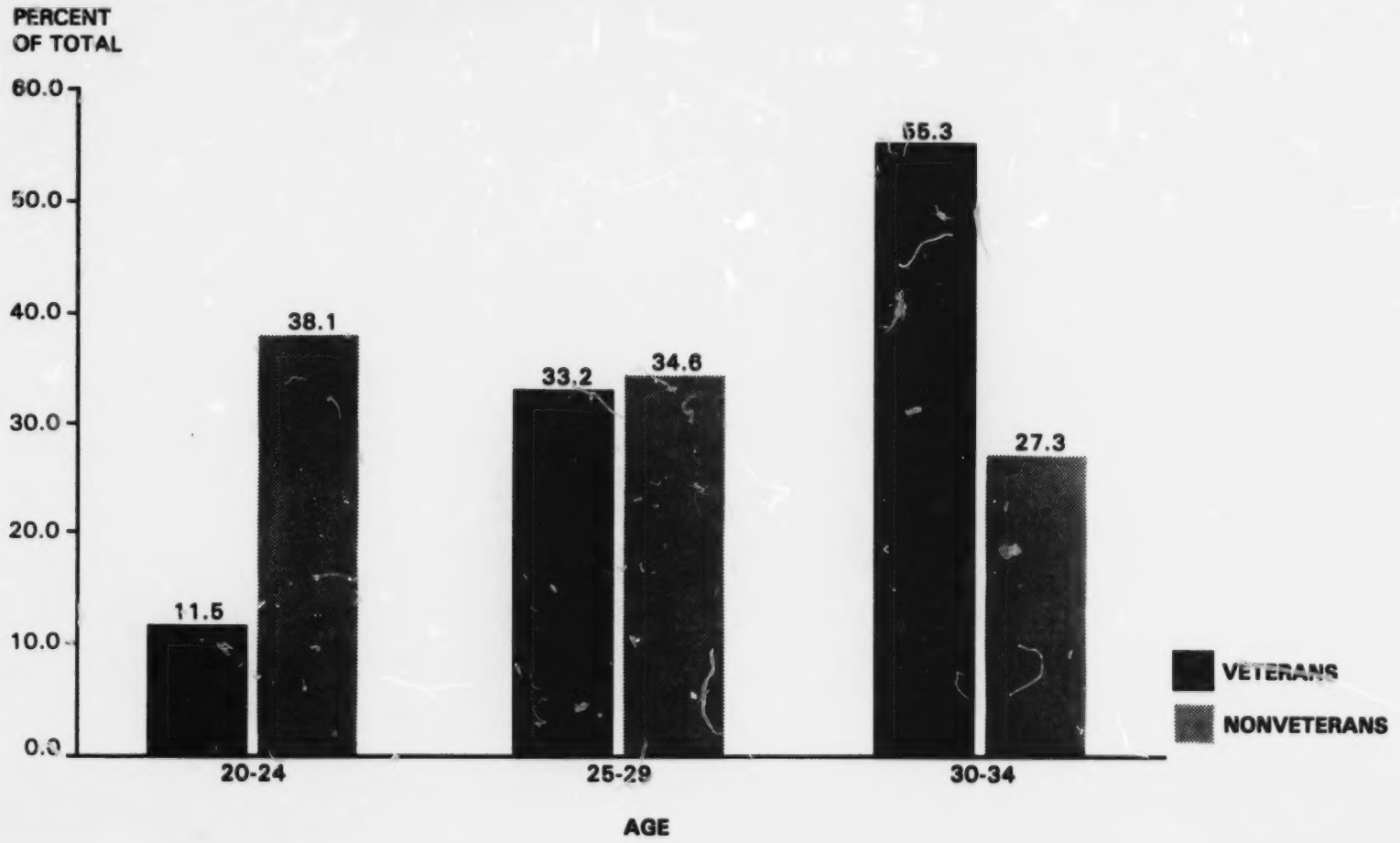
* The median age of nonveterans 20 to 24 is 21.2 years, which is one full year lower than the median for veterans 20 to 24.

FIGURE 2
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MALES 20 TO 34 YEARS OLD BY FIVE-YEAR AGE GROUPS: VETERANS AND NONVETERANS, OCTOBER 1983



Type of School

An examination of the types of school attended by each group indicates that of those men 20 to 34 who are enrolled, veterans and nonveterans differ only slightly in the proportion enrolled in college. They differ more significantly, however, in the relative proportions enrolled below the college level and in "special schools" (Table 2).

Table 2. Percentage Distribution of Males Enrolled in School by Type of School and Five-Year Age Groups: Veterans and Nonveterans 20 to 34 Years Old, October 1983 (Numbers in Thousands)

	Veterans				Nonveterans			
Type of School	20-24	25-29	30-34	Total	20-24	25-29	30-34	Total
Elementary & Secondary	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.9%	3.8%	2.6%	3.0%	3.5%
College	90.5	90.9	85.8	88.7	91.0	92.0	84.9	90.6
Special Schools	9.5	7.1	14.3	10.4	5.2	5.4	12.1	5.9
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.1%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Population	63	198	182	443	2,678	959	430	4,067

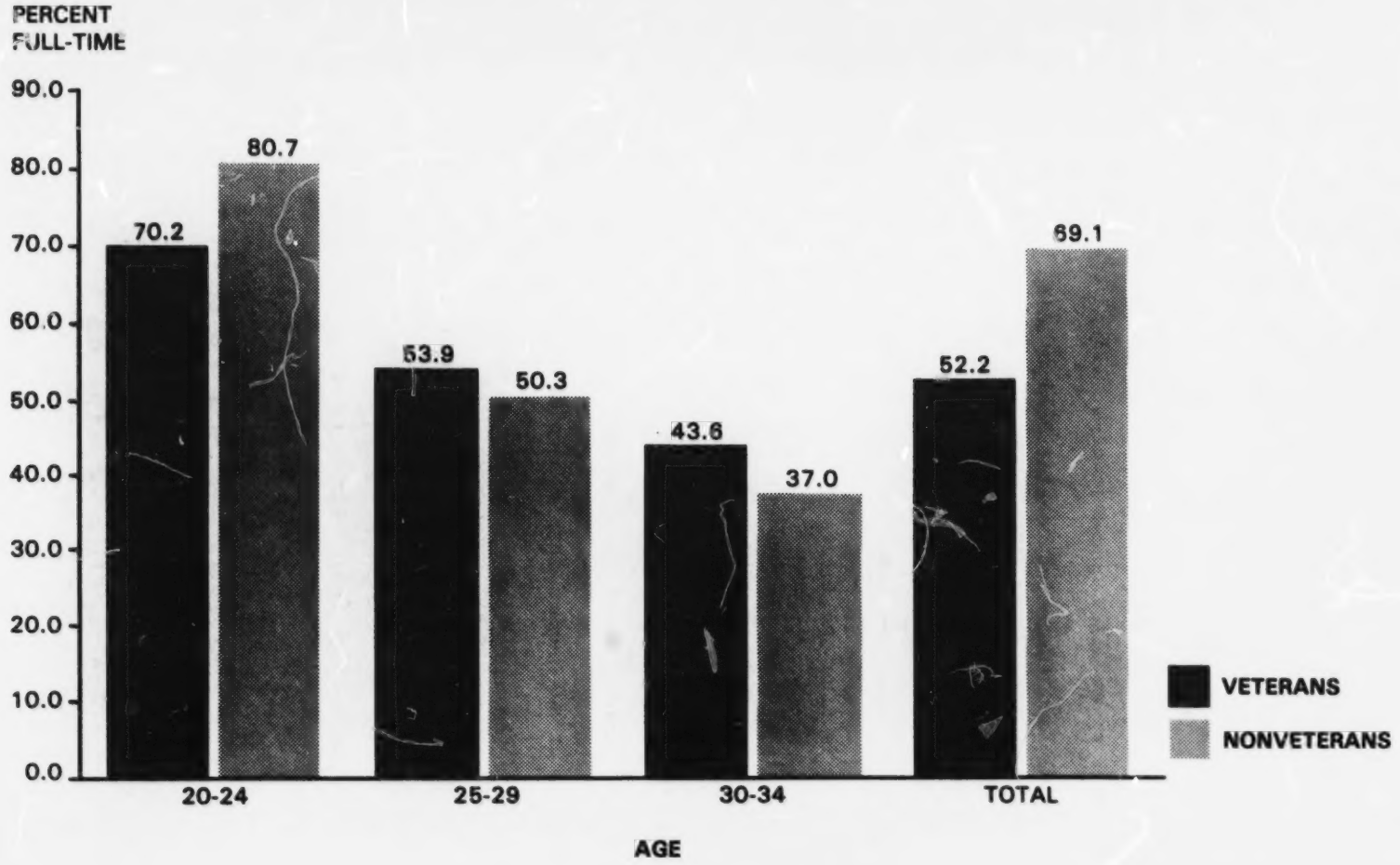
Although only a small proportion of both enrolled veterans and nonveterans 20 to 34 are in elementary and secondary schools, the proportion of nonveterans enrolled in such schools is nearly four times as great as the proportion of veterans enrolled (3.5 percent of nonveterans compared with 0.9 percent of veterans). The difference is due largely to the minimum educational requirements which veterans must have met for entry into military service.

Enrollment in "special schools," on the other hand, is more common among enrolled veterans than among enrolled nonveterans (10.4 percent of veterans in contrast to 5.9 percent of nonveterans). Financial aid for such schools under VA educational programs no doubt encourages many veterans to enroll in these schools.

At the highest level of education, enrolled veterans are similar to enrolled nonveterans in some ways, but different in others. They are alike in the proportion who are enrolled in college. Nearly 89 percent of school-enrolled veterans aged 20 to 34 are attending college compared with about 91 percent of school-enrolled nonveterans in that age group. The similarity also exists within each of the five-year age groups. On the other hand, veterans and nonveterans differ with respect to full-time or part-time college enrollment.

This difference is clearest when one examines the respective proportions of those enrolled full-time in college. For men aged 20 to 34, nonveterans in college are more likely to be attending full-time than are veterans: only about 52 percent of veterans in college are full-time students whereas more than 69 percent of nonveterans are attending full-time (Figure 3). But the pattern for the entire 15-year age group masks differences among the five-year age groups. In large measure, the higher proportion of full-time students among nonveterans 20 to 34 can be attributed to the pattern of the youngest men, 20 to 24, who constitute a larger share of nonveterans 20 to 34 than they do for the veteran group aged 20 to 34. The youngest nonveteran college students are more likely to be enrolled full-time than are their veteran counterparts.

FIGURE 3
PERCENT OF COLLEGE-ENROLLED MALES ATTENDING FULL-TIME BY FIVE-YEAR AGE GROUPS: VETERANS AND NONVETERANS 20 TO 34 YEARS OLD, OCTOBER 1983



However, for the older enrolled college men, those 25 and older, the opposite is true: veterans are more likely to be enrolled full-time than are nonveteran students (53.9 percent of enrolled veterans 25 to 29 versus 50.3 percent of enrolled nonveterans, and 43.6 percent of enrolled veterans 30 to 34 compared to 37.0 percent of enrolled nonveterans). Older veterans, who are generally eligible for GI Bill education benefits* might also be using VA educational benefits to help pay for their full-time college enrollment.

Year of College Enrollment

While it is true that veterans and nonveterans attending school are enrolled in college in similar proportions (irrespective of full-time or part-time status), nonveterans, generally, are further along in their college studies than are veterans. At each age, a higher proportion of college-enrolled veterans are enrolled in their first year of study, and a smaller proportion are enrolled in the fifth year and beyond than are college-enrolled nonveterans (Table 3). For example, for the age group 25 to 29, one-fifth of veterans in college are in their first year, compared to 14.4 percent of nonveterans; for this age group, only 7.8 percent of college-enrolled veterans, in contrast to nearly one-half of nonveterans in college (46.6 percent), are in advanced training beyond the fourth year.

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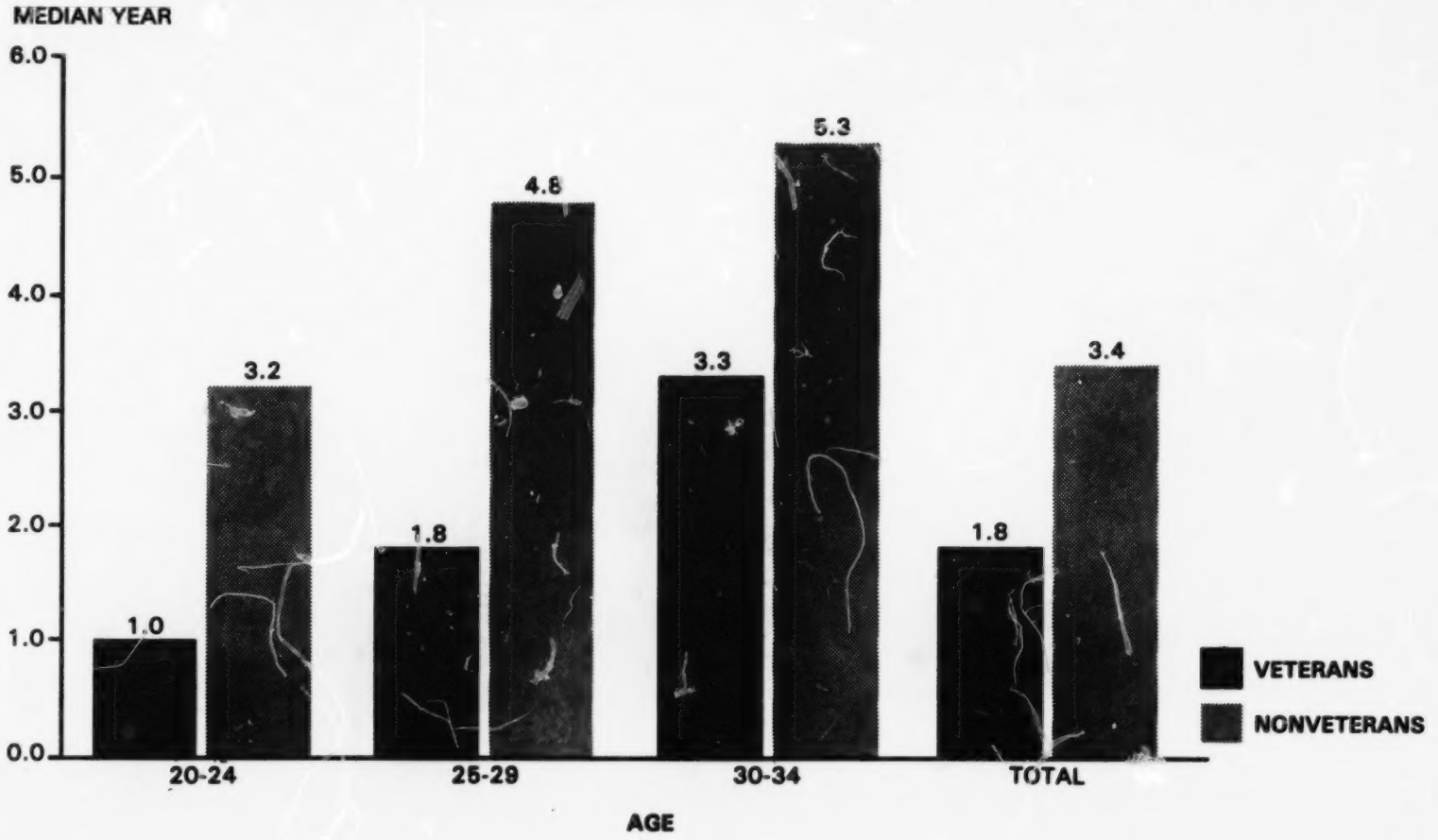
* Eligibility for the GI Bill is restricted to veterans who entered active military duty before January 1, 1977. Those entering active service thereafter qualify for the Veterans Education Assistance Program (VEAP), under which benefits are more limited than those provided by the GI Bill.

Table 3. Percentage Distribution of College-Enrolled Males by Year of Enrollment and Five-Year Age Groups: Veterans and Nonveterans 20 to 34 Years Old, October 1983 (Numbers in Thousands)

	Veterans				Nonveterans			
Year of College Enrollment	20-24	25-29	30-34	Total	20-24	25-29	30-34	Total
1	49.1%	20.0%	19.2%	23.9%	10.2%	14.4%	13.2%	11.5%
2	21.1	37.8	26.9	31.0	20.8	11.9	12.9	17.9
3	14.0	16.7	14.1	15.3	27.7	12.7	9.6	22.3
4	8.8	17.8	15.4	15.5	26.7	14.4	10.1	22.1
5	5.3	3.9	11.5	7.1	9.4	17.7	15.6	12.0
6 or more	1.8	3.9	12.8	7.1	5.2	28.9	38.6	14.2
Total	100.1%	100.1%	99.9%	99.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Population	57	180	156	393	2,437	882	365	3,684
Percent 5 or More Years	7.1	7.8	24.3	14.2	14.6	46.6	54.2	26.2

The pattern of median year of college enrollment also indicates that nonveterans are generally at a more advanced level than veterans. For the entire 15-year age group and for each five-year age group, nonveterans have a higher median year of college enrollment than do veterans (Figure 4). The median college year of enrollment for veterans 20 to 34 is 1.8 years, whereas the median for nonveterans is 3.4, more than one and one-half years more advanced. The median increases as age increases, with nonveterans holding the edge in each age group. For example, the median year of enrollment for college-enrolled veterans 20 to 24 is one year, compared to 3.2 years for nonveterans in that age group. For the oldest group, those 30 to 34, the median enrollment level for veterans is 3.3 years, while for nonveterans the median is 5.3 years, a level more advanced

FIGURE 4
MEDIAN YEAR OF COLLEGE ENROLLMENT
BY FIVE-YEAR AGE GROUPS: MALE VETERANS AND NONVETERANS
20 TO 34 YEARS OLD, OCTOBER 1983



than the traditional baccalaureate degree. Interruption or postponement of college because of military service and the greater likelihood of part-time enrollment help explain why veterans lag behind their nonveteran counterparts in terms of their year of college enrollment.

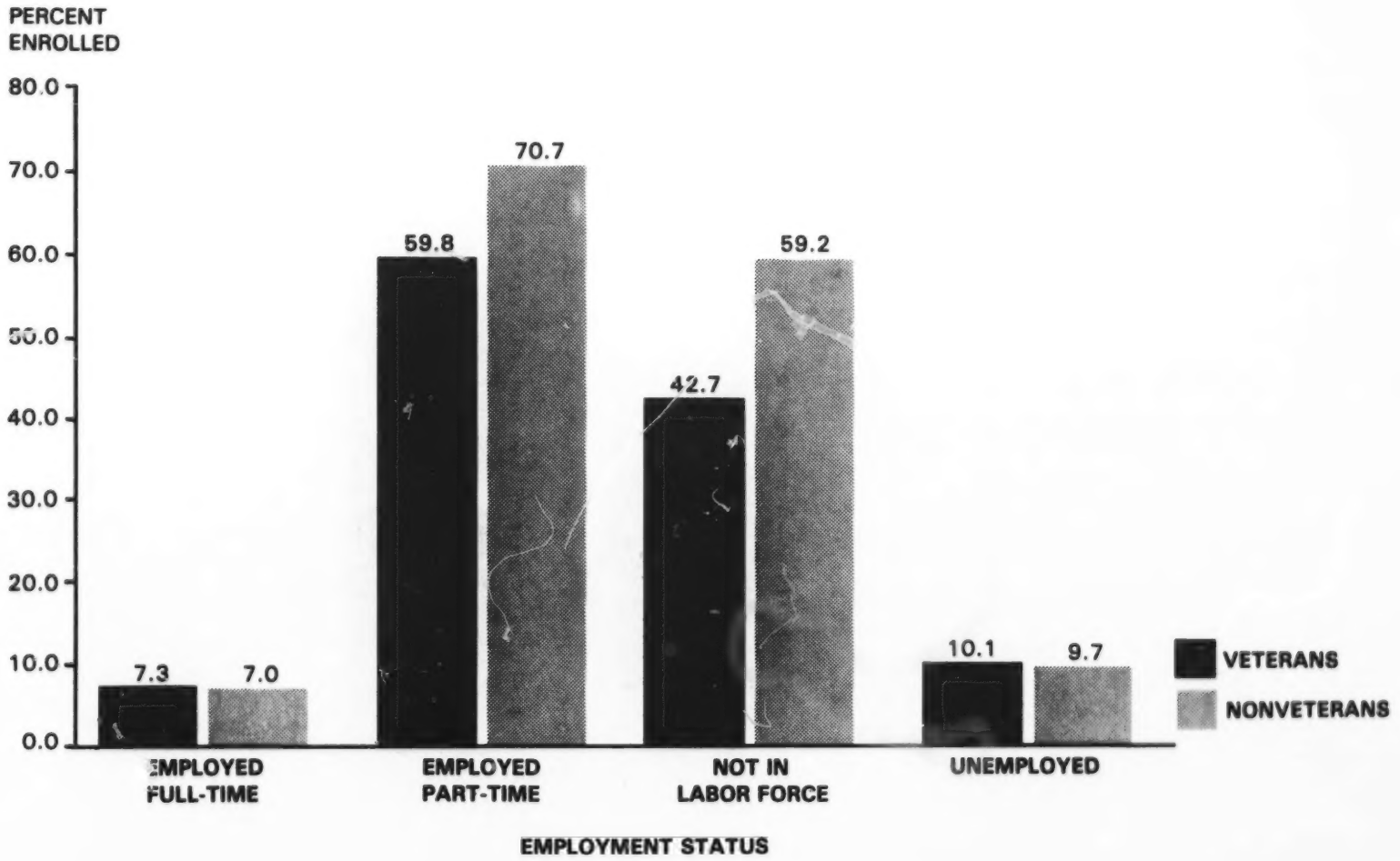
III. Employment and School Enrollment Among Veterans and Nonveterans

Enrollment Among Those Employed and Those Not Employed

There are considerable differences in school enrollment among those males employed full-time, those working part-time, and those not employed. For both veterans and nonveterans working full-time, the proportion who are enrolled in school is relatively small: 7.3 percent of veterans working full-time are enrolled compared to 7.0 percent of nonveterans (Figure 5).

Among those working part-time, however, the proportion enrolled is relatively large. In fact, a majority of both veterans and nonveterans working part-time are enrolled in school. Nearly 60 percent of veterans working part-time are enrolled, compared with nearly 71 percent of part-time employed nonveterans. Full-time employees, therefore, are not likely to be enrolled, whereas part-time employees are. For many full-time workers, schooling has already been completed. In some cases, full-time work is necessary to earn the money for enrollment in the future. Furthermore, full-time work frequently does not leave time for school. For many part-time employees, on the other hand, some of the time which would have been used for work is diverted to school attendance.

FIGURE 5
PERCENT ENROLLED IN SCHOOL BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS: MALE VETERANS AND NONVETERANS 20 TO 34 YEARS OLD, OCTOBER 1983



In examining enrollment among the group not employed, one must distinguish between those who are not employed because they are not in the labor force (i.e., they are not looking for work), and those who are unemployed. A substantial proportion of both veterans and nonveterans not in the labor force are enrolled: 42.7 percent of veterans not in the labor force, and 59.2 percent of nonveterans not in the labor force. However, only about ten percent of veterans and nonveterans who are unemployed are enrolled, perhaps because the unemployed are less likely than others to have either the economic resources or, in some cases, the educational qualifications to be enrolled.

Employment Among Those Enrolled

The previous section examined the relationship between employment and enrollment by looking at enrollment among the employed and the not employed. Examining the proportion enrolled among, for example, full-time employed veterans and nonveterans, as was done earlier, provides some insight into employment as a factor in determining enrollment. In this section, the propensity toward employment among veterans and nonveterans enrolled in school is examined. This perspective provides some insight into enrollment as a factor in the likelihood of taking a job.* The difference in perspective is illustrated by the observation that, although only about 7 percent of veterans and nonveterans employed full-time are enrolled in school (Figure 5), a majority of both veterans and nonveterans who are enrolled in school are also employed (66.5 percent of veterans and

* The availability of jobs is not explicitly considered.

57.5 percent of nonveterans) (Figure 6). Another way of stating the difference is to point out that only a small proportion of the full-time work force is comprised of students, whereas a large proportion of the population of students is made up of students who work.

Employment Among Those Enrolled by Five-Year Age Groups

As we might expect, within the total group of males aged 20 to 34 years, older men in school, regardless of veteran status, are more likely to be working than younger men (Table 4). In fact, the vast majority of enrolled men of age 25 and over are employed. For both enrolled veterans and nonveterans, the proportion working increases as age increases. For example, 43.1 percent of enrolled

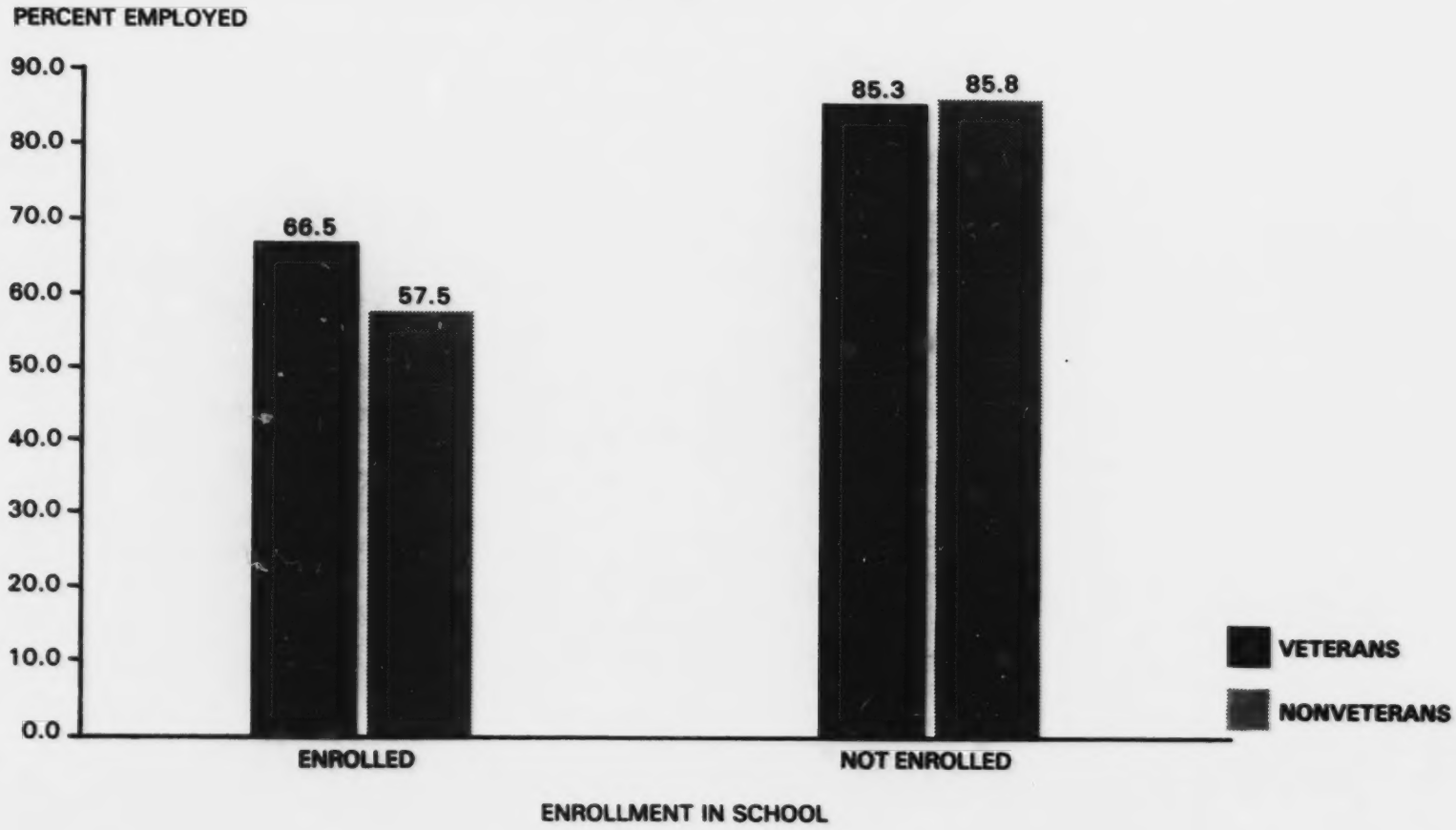
Table 4. Percent of Those Enrolled in School[1] Who are Employed by Five-Year Age Groups: Male Veterans and Nonveterans 20 to 34 Years Old, October 1983 (Numbers in Thousands)

	20-24		25-29		30-34		Total	
	Vets	Non-vets	Vets	Non-vets	Vets	Non-vets	Vets	Non-vets
Percent Employed	43.1	50.8	70.0	68.0	71.1	75.9	66.5	57.5
Population[2]	65	2,676	200	957	180	427	445	4,060

[1]Includes primary and secondary schools, college and special schools.

[2]Differs slightly fr "Number in School" shown in age categories of other tables because th number of cases with missing values on the variables differs from table to table, depending on the specific variables in the table.

FIGURE 6
PERCENT EMPLOYED BY ENROLLMENT IN SCHOOL: MALE VETERANS AND NONVETERANS 20 TO 34 YEARS OLD, OCTOBER 1983



veterans 20 to 24 years old work in contrast to 71.1 percent of enrolled veterans 30 to 34 years old. Nearly 51 percent of enrolled nonveterans 20 to 24 years old are working in contrast to more than three-quarters (75.9 percent) of nonveterans in the oldest five-year age group.

Contrasting veterans and nonveterans by five-year age groups reveals a pattern that, for the most part, reverses the direction of the difference observed between veterans and nonveterans in the overall age group. Specifically, for enrolled men 20 to 34, a higher proportion of veterans than nonveterans are employed: 66.5 percent of veterans versus 57.5 percent of nonveterans. However, among the youngest and oldest enrolled men in the 20-34 age range, nonveterans are more likely to be employed than veterans. In the youngest group, for example, 43.1 percent of enrolled veterans are employed compared with 50.8 percent of nonveterans, and about 71 percent of enrolled veterans 30 to 34 years old are employed while more than three-quarters of enrolled nonveterans (75.9 percent) are employed. On the other hand, among those 25 to 29 years old, a group which constitutes nearly one-half of enrolled veterans 20 to 34 years of age, veterans are slightly more likely to be employed than nonveterans: 70 percent and 68 percent, respectively.

In summary, then, enrolled male veterans 20 to 34 years old are more likely to be employed than are enrolled male nonveterans. This is due, in part, to the fact that veterans in the 20 to 34-year age group are generally older than nonveterans in this same broad age group and that older men are more likely to be working than are younger men. However, the employment difference between enrolled veterans and nonveterans by five-year age groups is such that the youngest and oldest veterans are less likely to be employed than are their nonveteran similar-aged counterparts.

Full-Time/Part-Time Enrollment and Full-Time/Part-Time Employment Among College Students

Since the vast majority of enrolled veterans and nonveterans 20 to 34 years old are college students, this section limits the examination of enrollment and employment to those enrolled in college. Enrollment and employment are further refined to take full-time and part-time status into account.

One would expect full-time and part-time college enrollment to be related to employment and to whether that employment is full-time or part-time. One should also consider the following questions: Are full-time students less likely to be working than part-time students? Are full-time students who are working less likely to be working full-time than part-time students who are working? Table 5 addresses these questions.

Table 5. Percentage Distribution of College-Enrolled Males by Employment Status and Full-Time or Part-Time Enrollment: Veterans and Nonveterans 20 to 34 Years Old, October 1983 (Numbers in Thousands)

	Enrolled Full-Time		Enrolled Part-Time	
	Veterans	Non-veterans	Veterans	Non-veterans
Employed	47.3%	42.7%	92.0%	89.2%
Full-Time	26.3	9.7	86.1	79.9
Part-Time	21.0	33.0	5.9	9.3
Not Employed	52.7	57.3	8.0	10.8
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
(Number in College)	205	2,541	188	1,133
Percent of Employed Working Full-Time (Percent Employed F.T.) / (Percent Employed)	55.6	22.7	93.6	89.6

For both veterans and nonveterans who are college students, full-time or part-time enrollment is related to employment. Full-time students are less likely to be employed than are part-time students, although a substantial proportion of full-time students are working. Not quite half of these veterans and nonveterans enrolled full-time are employed (47.3 percent of veterans and 42.7 percent of nonveterans), whereas the overwhelming majority of part-time students hold jobs. More than nine out of ten veterans (92.0 percent) and nearly ninety percent of nonveterans (89.2 percent) going to college part-time are also working. Full-time students, no doubt, have less time for jobs than do part-time students;* many part-time students, in fact, are enrolled part-time because of the time commitment to work. The major difference between veterans and nonveterans is in the proportion of full-time college students who are also working full-time: 26.3 percent for veterans compared to about one out of ten nonveterans (9.7 percent). Indeed 55.6 percent of veterans who are going to college full-time and simultaneously holding any job are working at those jobs full-time, compared with only 22.7 percent of nonveterans.

In part, this is due to the difference in the age distributions of veterans and nonveterans. Veterans are older than nonveterans, and being older they are more likely to be married with the obligation to support a family. The data in Table 6 show clearly that those most likely to be married heads of families are part-time students, older students, and veterans, at each age.

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* The data in Table 5 do not address the issue of how many college students seek work, but are unable to find it. Data not shown here, however, indicate that relatively few full-time college students are unemployed; that is, either they are not looking for work or they are working.

Table 6. Percent of College-Enrolled Who Are Married Heads of Families by Full-Time or Part-Time Enrollment and Five-Year Age Groups: Male Veterans and Nonveterans, October 1983 (Numbers in Thousands)

	20-24		25-29		30-34		Total	
College Enrollment	Vets	Non-vets	Vets	Non-vets	Vets	Non-vets	Vets	Non-vets
Full-Time								
Percent Married Heads of Families	5.3	3.7	23.9	12.9	25.6	17.5	21.9	7.3
(Number in College)	57	2,437	180	882	156	365	393	3,684
Part-Time								
Percent Married Heads of Families	29.4	13.1	54.2	44.1	70.5	66.1	59.6	35.7
(Number in College)	17	472	83	438	88	230	188	1,140

For example, among veterans 20 to 34 years old, nearly 60 percent of part-time students are married heads of families compared with 21.9 percent of full-time students; among veterans who are part-time students, the oldest are nearly 2.5 times as likely to be married heads of families as are the youngest (70.5 percent of the 30-to 34-year-olds versus 29.4 percent of those 20 to 24); and veterans 20 to 34 enrolled part-time more than 1.5 times as likely to have such responsibilities as are their nonveteran counterparts (59.6 percent of veterans compared with 35.7 percent of nonveterans).

IV. College Enrollment Among Veterans and Nonveterans, 1978 and 1983

Gauging change in the proportion of veterans enrolled over time provides some insight, although limited and inconclusive, into the effects of changes in VA educational programs on the propensity of veterans to enroll. Again, since the vast majority of enrolled veterans and nonveterans aged 20 to 34 in 1978 and 1983 were enrolled in college, the description of change in enrollment over time focuses on college enrollment.

Between 1978 and 1983, the proportion of veterans enrolled in college declined while the proportion of nonveterans enrolled increased. In 1978, 12.1 percent of all male veterans 20 to 34 years old were college students. By 1983, however, the proportion of college students among veterans declined by 2.3 percentage points, to 9.8 percent (Table 7). In contrast, there was an increase in the proportion of male nonveterans 20 to 34 years old enrolled in college: from 15.1 percent in 1978 to 17.2 percent in 1983. For each age group, the proportion of veterans enrolled declined over the period, while the proportion of nonveterans enrolled increased; the youngest group (those 20 to 24 years old) have the greatest relative change.* That is, the youngest group of veterans shows the highest relative decrease in enrollment between 1978 and 1983, while the youngest group of nonveterans shows the greatest relative increase.

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* For 1978, both the veterans' and nonveterans' age category 20 to 24 includes men 18 and 19 years old. To facilitate comparison, Table 7, on which this section is based, includes 18 and 19-year-olds in the 20 to 24-year category for veterans and nonveterans in 1983; Table 7 is the only table which includes men under 20.

Table 7. Percentage of Males Who Are Enrolled in College by Five-Year Age Groups: Veterans and Nonveterans 20 to 34 Years Old, October 1978 and 1983 (Numbers in Thousands)

	20-24 [1]		25-29		30-34		Total	
	Veterans	Non-veterans	Veterans	Non-veterans	Veterans	Non-veterans	Veterans	Non-veterans
1978								
Percent in College	17.4	24.2	14.8	9.6	8.8	4.2	12.1	15.1
(Number in College)	1,045	8,440	2,243	6,292	3,628	3,997	6,916	18,729
1983								
Percent in College	12.5	28.0	13.5	10.1	7.0	5.3	9.8	17.2
(Number in College)	465	13,536	1,331	8,770	2,216	6,940	4,012	29,246

[1] Includes men 18 and 19, both for 1978 and 1983 and for veterans and nonveterans.

The increase in college enrollment among nonveterans reflects overall changes in higher education over the 5-year period: increasing opportunities for enrollment in two-year colleges, as well as for part-time enrollment, and enrollment for older students. Veterans have not, by any means, missed out on these opportunities. Indeed, nearly one out of ten veterans between 20 and 34 years old in 1983 was enrolled in college. Nearly nine out of ten veterans in school were enrolled in college; yet, there was a decline in the proportion of veterans in college. This decline can be attributed, in some measure, to the change in the number of veterans eligible for the GI Bill, a number which has been declining steadily in the past few years. This decline reflects both the shrinking number of eligibles separated from the service each year as well as the number of veterans losing their GI Bill eligibility because of the post-discharge ten-year entitlement limit. Most of the veterans 20 to 34 years of age in 1978, except perhaps the very youngest, were eligible for benefits under the GI Bill; however, most of the veterans of that age in 1983, except for the oldest, were no longer eligible for the GI Bill, although they were qualified for Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) benefits.

V. Summary

This report shows that male veterans aged 20 to 34 differ in some important ways from their nonveteran counterparts with respect to school enrollment. Most basically, nonveterans hold a slight edge over veterans in overall school enrollment: 16.0 percent of nonveterans are enrolled compared to 11.1 percent of veterans.

Yet, observation of the entire 15-year age group masks differences among five-year age groups. Specifically, the pattern for the youngest group, 20 to 24, resembles the pattern for the entire 15-year age group; the youngest nonveterans are more likely to be enrolled than the youngest veterans. Among men 25 and older, however, the pattern is reversed. Veterans in the two oldest groups, ages 25 to 29 and 30 to 34, are more likely to be enrolled in school than nonveterans in those groups. This is not surprising; it is at these ages that veterans resume their education following military service and that nonveterans have had ample opportunity to complete theirs.

Differences in overall school enrollment are, to some extent, less informative than differences in the kinds of schools in which veterans and nonveterans are enrolled. For instance, veterans and nonveterans aged 20 to 34 differ only slightly in the proportion enrolled in college, but differ more significantly in the proportion enrolled below the college level and in "special schools" (i.e.,

nondegree vocational, trade, and business programs). Nonveterans are more than four times as likely as veterans to be enrolled in elementary and secondary schools, although only a small proportion of each group is enrolled at that level. On the other hand, veterans are more likely to be in "special school" programs than nonveterans, perhaps, in part, because the VA provides benefits to help pay for many such programs. About nine out of ten veterans and nonveterans enrolled in school are enrolled in college. However, they differ with respect to full-time or part-time enrollment. For the total age group, 20 to 34, nonveterans are more likely to be enrolled in college full-time; yet, older veterans are more likely to be enrolled full-time than older nonveterans. In a sense, veterans have "catching up to do." At each age, the median year of college is lower for veterans than nonveterans. For each five-year age group, nonveterans are more likely to be enrolled beyond year four of college than veterans.

As one might expect, employment and enrollment are, to some extent, related events. For example, among those employed full-time, only a small proportion are enrolled -- about 7 percent of both veterans and nonveterans. Similarly, among the unemployed, who generally lack the economic resources for school, enrollment is not common. It is among part-time workers (and those not in the labor force) that enrollment is most common. In fact, nearly 60 percent of veterans and over 70 percent of nonveterans working part-time are enrolled in school.

Although they constitute only a small proportion of the full-time work force, working students make up a large proportion of the student population. A majority of both veterans and nonveterans 20 to 34 years old who are enrolled are also employed, with the proportion employed increasing as age increases. Enrolled veterans 20 to 34 are more likely to be employed than their nonveteran counterparts. However, the opposite is true for the youngest and oldest among those in the total 15-year age group: enrolled nonveterans are more likely to be employed than enrolled veterans.

Is there a difference in employment between full-time and part-time students? This question is addressed by examining full-time/part-time enrollment and employment among college students, who make up the vast majority of enrolled veterans and nonveterans. For both veterans and nonveterans in college, full-time students are less likely to be employed than are part-time students, although a substantial proportion of full-time students are working. Among part-time students, on the other hand, about nine out of ten veterans and nonveterans are employed. The major difference between veterans and nonveterans is in the proportion of full-time students who are also employed full-time (26.3 percent of veterans who are full-time students are also holding down a full-time job compared to only 9.7 percent of nonveterans enrolled full-time). This is attributed, in part, to the fact that, at each age, enrolled veterans are more likely than enrolled nonveterans to be married family heads, who have financial obligations to support family members.

Between 1978 and 1983, the proportion of veterans 20 to 34 years old enrolled in college declined while the proportion of nonveterans enrolled increased. This is true for each five-year age group, with the youngest men 20 to 24 showing the greatest relative change. The decline in enrollment for veterans is attributed, in some measure, to the decline in the number of veterans eligible for GI Bill benefits and the increase in the number of veterans eligible for educational benefits under the Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP).

VI. Appendix Table

School Enrollment by Five-Year Age Groups:
Male Veterans and Nonveterans 20 to 34 Years Old, October 1983
(Numbers in Thousands)

Enrollment Status	Veterans				Nonveterans			
	20-24	25-29	30-34	Total	20-24	25-29	30-34	Total
Total (Number of Males)	462	1,331	2,216	4,009	9,662	8,770	6,940	25,372
Not Enrolled	399	1,133	2,034	3,566	6,984	7,811	6,510	21,305
Percent Not Enrolled	86.4	85.1	91.8	88.9	72.3	89.1	83.8	84.0
Enrolled	63	198	182	443	2,678	959	430	4,067
Percent Enrolled	13.6	14.9	8.2	11.1	27.7	10.9	6.2	16.0
Elementary & Secondary	*	4	*	4	103	25	13	141
College	57	180	156	393	2,437	882	365	3,684
Full-Time	40	97	68	205	1,965	444	135	2,544
1	16	10	10	36	131	37	19	187
2	8	40	25	73	378	46	16	440
3	8	16	6	30	574	60	8	642
4	5	21	6	32	601	67	17	685
5	2	3	9	14	178	70	28	276
6 or more	1	7	12	20	103	164	47	314
Part-Time	17	83	88	188	472	438	230	1,140
1	12	26	20	58	117	90	29	236
2	4	28	17	49	130	59	31	220
3	0	14	16	30	100	52	27	179
4	0	11	18	29	49	60	20	129
5	1	4	9	14	52	86	29	167
6 or more	0	0	8	8	24	91	94	209
Special Schools	6	14	26	46	138	52	52	242

* Less than 500 cases